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# The Assertion of English Royal Authority in the American Colonies and Royal Revenue: 1651-1701

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The Assertion of English Royal Authority in the American Colonies and Royal Revenue: 1651-  
1701

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HST 499

On April 18<sup>th</sup> 1689, a number of residents of Boston, Massachusetts formed a militia and began to remove all of the elements of royal power stationed in the town. The militia captured the captain of the frigate *Rose*, to prevent it firing upon them.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, other militia members captured and imprisoned many royal agents and other crown loyalists.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the Governor of the Dominion of New England, Edmund Andros, willfully surrendered from the fort in which he was hiding, and the town militia imprisoned him as well.<sup>3</sup> The 1689 Boston rebellion during the England's Glorious Revolution was both a response to the political chaos in England and a reaction against the rule of the Dominion.<sup>4</sup> The events in Boston responded to a culmination of increasing royal efforts to control the American colonies; a system that had been nominally in place since the 1607 creation of the Virginia Colony, but became focused and honed in the aftermath of the English Civil War.

The development of English royal colonial policy in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was dependent on several key factors: the need for royal revenue, the English Civil War, and the growing economic significance of the American colonies. Royal revenue was a constant concern for the English monarchs of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Expenses rose as their court grew and monarchs faced difficulties with getting Parliament to approve new taxes in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The monarchy of England was disrupted by the English Civil War, a conflict between the royalty and their supporters, and the Parliamentary faction, between 1642 and 1651. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the monarchy began to create its commercial and colonial policy that would shape the colonies in the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. One source of revenue that Parliament could not deny the king was the American colonies. Especially after the English Civil War, the

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<sup>1</sup> David S. Lovejoy. *The Glorious Revolution in America*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1972) 240.

<sup>2</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 240.

<sup>3</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 240.

<sup>4</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 239.

economies of the American colonies were significant enough that the king could extract substantial revenue through customs on exports from the colonies and from direct taxation of the colonists. Although revenue was a constant concern for the English Monarchy in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, after the English Civil War the need for new sources of royal revenue became a priority. The English crown implemented a series of policies aimed at centralizing monarchical rule over the American colonies in order to utilize potential revenue sources from the colonies.

Before the early 1900s, historians studied England and the American colonies as two separate entities, especially from the American perspective. However, the development of the American colonies in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was closely tied to the history of the Stuart monarchy in England, and their issues with revenue, trade, religion, and political competition. The Stuarts were a Scottish noble family who had ruled Scotland since 1371. The first Stuart to rule England was James I (r. 1603-1625), who was named the heir of Elizabeth I (r. 1558-1603). James I was succeeded by his second son, Charles I (r. 1625-1649). Both James I and Charles I faced resistance from Parliament, as they were open in their belief in the tenets of absolute monarchy. In a 1610 speech to Parliament, James I stated that “so is it sedition in subjects to dispute what a King may do in the height of his power.”<sup>5</sup> With this statement, James I argued that no members of Parliament nor any other of his subjects could go against his rule. Previous English monarch had also supported the notions of absolute monarchy, but James I and his son Charles I openly proclaimed it to Parliament.<sup>6</sup> This did little to endear themselves to Parliament, increasing the animosity between the two groups until they came to armed conflict in the English Civil War.

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<sup>5</sup> King James I, “The King’s Speech To Parliament, 1610” From James I, Works, 528-531. Michigan State University. Accessed June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. <http://coursesa.matrix.msu.edu/~hst201/SpeechParl.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Robert Bucholz and Newton Key, *Early Modern England 1485-1714: A Narrative History*. (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell Ltd.: 2009), 220.

By 1642, Charles I and his supporters began to fight with the Parliamentary faction of England, in what became the English Civil War, which lasted from 1642 to 1651. Charles I himself was executed by the Parliamentarians in 1649, but fighting continued until 1651. Oliver Cromwell, one of the major commanders of the Parliamentary forces, named himself the Lord Protector and ruled England until his death in 1658. This period between 1651 and 1660 is known as the Interregnum<sup>7</sup>, when England had no king. In 1660, Charles II (r. 1660-1685), the son of Charles I, returned from exile to rule England. In the wake of his restoration Charles II created many of the royal colonial policies that would shape English colonial activity in the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, including the reissue of the Navigation Act, as well as the end of the Massachusetts Bay Company.<sup>8</sup> Charles II pursued a centralizing colonial policy because Parliament did not allow him to ask for the creation of any new taxes, necessitating turning to the colonies, which were the sole jurisdiction of the king.<sup>9</sup> In 1660, Parliament offered Charles II a package of taxes and other deals worth approximately £1.2 million, in exchange for not asking for any new taxes and granting Parliament the right to use the traditional sources of royal revenue, namely the king's demesne.<sup>10</sup> Charles II was succeeded by James II (r. 1685-1688), his younger brother. James II was responsible for the creation of the Dominion of New England. However, James II was widely unpopular in both England and in the American colonies, as he was a Roman Catholic.<sup>11</sup> In 1688, a group of English nobles invited William III of the

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<sup>7</sup> Interregnum is a Latin word meaning between reigns.

<sup>8</sup> "An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation". In *English Historical Documents Volume VIII*, edited by Andrew Browning and David C. Douglas. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 533-537. Future references to texts from this volume will be marked with EHD Vol. VIII

<sup>9</sup> William Petty, "The Powers of the Kings of England". In *English Historical Documents Volume VIII*, edited by Andrew Browning and David C. Douglas. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 73.

<sup>10</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 279.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel K. Richter, *Before the Revolution: America's Ancient Pasts*. (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press: Cambridge), 291.

Netherlands (r. 1688-1702)<sup>12</sup>, the husband of Mary II (r. 1688-1694), who was James II's daughter, then invaded England in what came to be known as the Glorious Revolution.

One of the reasons why there was no consistent royal colonial policy before the English Civil War was the fact that the colonies in the Americas were initially quite unsuccessful and not worth the king's time and attention. The Virginia colony was established in 1607, the earliest successful English colony in the region. Next were Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay in 1620 and 1629 respectively, both established in the Massachusetts region of New England. The colony of New Hampshire was also established in 1629, but few lived there in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Maryland was the last English colony founded by a charter in North America before the English Civil War, in 1632. After the English Civil War and the restoration of the monarchy, there was a growth in the establishment of new colonies. Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Connecticut were all granted charters between 1662 and 1664, although settlers had lived in the region beforehand. New York was established in 1664 after it was seized from the Dutch during the Second Anglo-Dutch War from 1665-1667. Lastly, Pennsylvania and Delaware were founded in 1681 and 1682 respectively. The Dominion of New England, which was established in 1686 during the reign of James II, united the colonies of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine<sup>13</sup>, Connecticut, East and West Jersey, and all of their constituent territories under one governor who was subordinate to the king.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> These are the dates for William III's reign in England, he ruled the Netherlands from 1672 to 1702. William III was also Charles II's nephew. This gave William III claim to England's throne.

<sup>13</sup> Maine was initially its own individual colony, first founded in 1607, but was annexed by Massachusetts Bay after the colony collapsed.

<sup>14</sup> Commission to Sir Edmund Andros as governor of the Dominion of New England" In *English Historical Documents Volume IX: American Colonial Documents to 1776*, edited by David C. Douglas and Merrill Jensen, Vol. IX. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 239-245. Future references to texts in this volume will be marked with EHD Vol. IX.

The Massachusetts Bay colony is one of the most documented examples of the implementation of royal colonial policy for revenue. While all of the English colonies in North America were affected in some manner by England's post-Civil War colonial policy, Massachusetts Bay was one of the most targeted by the crown. There were several reasons for this, including the economic status of Massachusetts Bay, its resistance to crown policy, and the majority Puritan population of the colony.

Scholars of American colonial history have been discussing the interactions between England and the American colonies for well over a century. Before the late 1800s, most histories of the United States focused little attention on the colonial period, and those who did often portrayed the British as little more than tyrants.<sup>15</sup> This conception of American history changed with the Imperial School of American history. Some of the notable scholars of this school include Herbert Levi Osgood, Charles McLean Andrews, and George Louis Beer.<sup>16</sup> Imperial School historians studied the colonial history of the United States from the perspective of Britain and the early British Empire. Imperial School works tend to focus on the economic and political development of colonial institutions as they were influenced by Britain.

Imperial School historians were most influenced by von Ranke and the historicists, as well as the discipline of scientific history.<sup>17</sup> In particular, Imperial School scholarship relies very heavily on analysis of primary sources, which historicists stressed. The Imperial School ideology was most utilized in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and fell largely out of favor by the 1940s, although

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<sup>15</sup> Herbert Levi Osgood. "England and the Colonies." *Political Science Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (September 1887): 440-69.

<sup>16</sup> For other Imperial School historians beyond Osgood, see, Charles McLean Andrews. *The Colonial Period of American History*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934); George Louis Beer. *The Commercial Policy of England toward the American Colonies*. (New York: Columbia College, 1893); and Oliver Morton Dickerson. *American Colonial Government 1696-1765: A Study of the British Board of Trade in Its Relation to the American Colonies, Political, Industrial, Administrative*. (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1912)

<sup>17</sup> Mark T. Gilderhus. *History and Historians: A Historiographical Introduction*. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1987.) 45.

they had a lasting effect on American historiography: later authors would study the colonial era in much more depth and consider Britain's role in the history of the United States as more than the antagonists of the revolution. The Atlantic world school of history, first appearing in the 1970s, follows the trends first set by the Imperial School and expands on their ideas, incorporating new concepts and developments in history.

The Atlantic world approach stresses studying the history of Atlantic nations during the colonial period in the context of each other. One of the early 'Atlantic world' works that examines the role of royal administration in the American colonies is Jack M. Sosin's *English America and the Restoration Monarchy of Charles II: Transatlantic Politics, Commerce, and Kinship*. This work explores British and colonial American connections during the Restoration monarchy after the English Civil war.<sup>18</sup> Sosin, alongside other Atlantic world authors who focus on England and the American colonies, differs from the earlier Imperial School in that Sosin considers England and the American colonies as equal influences on the other. The Imperial School scholarship tended to focus on England as the metropolis and America as the periphery.<sup>19</sup> Many philosophies of history, including the Annales School, influenced Atlantic world history, using the principles of anthropology in history, and postcolonial history.<sup>20</sup>

A large variety of primary sources are available to study the English king's assertion of royal authority in the American colonies. Compared to other earlier periods of history, there are more surviving sources thanks to the preservation efforts of the British government during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This paper analyzes a variety of sources from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The majority of

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<sup>18</sup> Jack M. Sosin. *English America and the Restoration Monarchy of Charles II: Transatlantic Politics, Commerce, and Kinship*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980).

<sup>19</sup> Sosin, *English America and the Restoration Monarchy of Charles II*, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Gilderhus, *History and Historians*, 94.



these documents are English royal and governmental documents concerning administration and trade in the American colonies, including the Navigation Act, the governmental commission of Edmund Andros, and colonial reports by Edward Randolph.

A number of the documents important to understanding the assertion of royal authority in the American colonies after the English Civil War are British economic legislation and policy, such as the Navigation Act.<sup>21</sup> While legislation, such as the Navigation Acts, represents a joint effort between king and Parliament to control trade in the colonies, these Acts shed considerable light on both the colonists' reactions to crown attempts to increase direct control, as well as some of the ways that the English monarchy extracted revenue from the colonies. The final main group of documents important to an understanding of the assertion of royal authority in the American colonies are the correspondences between the crown and royal agents in the colonies, especially Edmund Andros and Edward Randolph.<sup>22</sup> Randolph was the primary agent of the crown in the colonies, tasked with investigating the councils and governments of the colonies, and reporting any crimes they committed to the crown for judgement.<sup>23</sup> Andros was the first royal governor appointed to the Dominion of New England, a royal attempt at consolidating all of the colonies in the New England region and bringing them under direct royal control.<sup>24</sup>

This paper will discuss four major ways in which the English crown attempted to assert its authority in Massachusetts and other American colonies in order to secure a more stable

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<sup>21</sup> "An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation". EHD Vol. VIII, 533-537.

<sup>22</sup> "Commission to Sir Edmund Andros as governor of the Dominion of New England" In *English Historical Documents Volume IX: American Colonial Documents to 1776*, edited by David C. Douglas and Merrill Jensen, Vol. IX. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 239-245. And Edward Randolph, "Edward Randolph: report on the state of affairs in New England" In *English Historical Documents Volume IX: American Colonial Documents to 1776*, edited by David C. Douglas and Merrill Jensen. Vol. IX. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 237-239

<sup>23</sup> Randolph, "Report on the State of Affairs in New England", EHD Vol. IX, 237.

<sup>24</sup> "Commission to Sir Edmund Andros as governor of the Dominion of New England", EHD Vol. IX.

source of revenue. The earliest efforts after the English Civil War came in the form of trade legislation, most notably the Navigation Act.<sup>25</sup> Without political authority in America, the colonists were free to largely ignore the Navigation Act. To ensure enforcement of the Navigation Act, the crown employed two different strategies in succession.

The first was to send agents, most notably Edward Randolph, to the colonies to investigate on the economic and political activities, and report back to the crown on their wrongdoings.<sup>26</sup> The other way the English crown attempted to assert its authority in the colonies was through direct political control, which was achieved with the Dominion of New England. The Dominion ensured a steady source of royal revenue by enforcing the Navigation Acts and through direct taxation of the colonists.

After the Glorious Revolution in 1688, the newly crowned King William III instituted the Board of Trade, representing a midpoint between the Dominion of New England and Edward Randolph in terms of royal supervision of the colonies. The Board of Trade and its investigators were not fully ruling the colonies under the name of the king, as the vast majority of colonial governments actively resisted the rule of the Dominion. However, the Board of Trade was a held greater authority in the colonies than the earlier investigators like Edward Randolph, as Board agents were directly charged with monitoring the colonies and reporting to the Privy Council and the King with recommended actions for the colonies. Although revenue was a constant concern for the English Monarchy in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, after the English Civil War the need for new sources of royal revenue became a priority. The English crown implemented a series of policies

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<sup>25</sup> “An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation”, EHD Vol. VIII.

<sup>26</sup> Randolph’s reports on New England were one of the main justifications for the revoke of the Massachusetts Bay Charter in 1684.

aimed at centralizing monarchical rule over the American colonies in order to utilize potential revenue sources from the colonies.

Revenue has long been an issue for the English monarchs, especially the Stuarts of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. James I, who succeeded Elizabeth I after her death in 1603, inherited a shaky financial situation for the crown and the whole of England. England was wracked by inflation and agricultural instability<sup>27</sup> in the late 1500s and early 1600s, which reduced royal revenue by up to 40% from the early 1500s.<sup>28</sup> The majority of royal revenue came from personal domains as well as varying forms of tax, each of which had to be granted by Parliament.<sup>29</sup> James I, however, even had trouble collecting the revenue from his own domains, as he inherited an inefficient bureaucracy and administration from his Tudor predecessors. Local officials and servants of the crown were primarily in the business of protecting their own interests, and often vastly undervalued the amount of tax owed by property owners.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to revenue problems, James I had a vast amount of expenses to fulfill the lifestyle expected of a king and his family. In contrast to Elizabeth, who was unmarried and had no children and therefore relatively lower familial expenditures, James I had a wife and children, who each needed money. Henry I, James' eldest son, required £25,000 a year to finance his court.<sup>31</sup> In addition to familial expenses, James also had to pay for gifts to courtiers and finance his own lavish court, including an increase in the royal wardrobe expenses by 400% when

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<sup>27</sup> England experienced periods of bad harvests and famine throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>28</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 222.

<sup>29</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 224.

<sup>30</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 223.

<sup>31</sup> Crown revenue and expenditure statistics are from Robert Bucholz and Newton Key's *Early Modern England 1485-1714: A Narrative History*. Bucholz and Key provide an excellent overview of the expenses of the crown at the beginning of the Stuart Monarchy.

compared to Elizabeth I.<sup>32</sup> All of these combined expenses drove James' peacetime expenditures to £500,000 a year, £200,000 more than Elizabeth I wartime expenditures.<sup>33</sup> As an ultimate result, these massive expenditures drove royal debts to all-time highs: £900,000 by 1618.<sup>34</sup> Due to his ever growing expenses, James I needed to find new sources of revenue, especially from taxation, however, Parliament was increasingly unwilling to grant James I new tax measures.

Revenue issues plagued the Stuart monarchs until the English Civil War, especially as Parliament was increasingly unwilling to grant the king new taxes. Animosity between the monarchy and Parliament grew in the early 1600s as King James I and his successor Charles I pushed the ideals of absolute monarchy publicly, which earned them little clout with Parliament.<sup>35</sup> Revenue was a continual problem for the Stuart monarchs, a problem to which the new source of potential revenue from the grant of stockholder charters establishing trading companies across the world presented itself as a partial solution in the early 1600s. .

Before the Restoration monarchy, the Stuart kings took little interest in directly administering the colonies. James I and Charles I primarily issued royal stockholder charters to colonial companies such as the Virginia Company or the Massachusetts Bay Company.<sup>36</sup> These charters provided revenue to the king, because the king required certain concessions in the charters. In some charters, such as the first Virginia Company charter, the king was also considered a stockholder, and given a position of political power in the company.<sup>37</sup> Stockholder

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<sup>32</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 223.

<sup>33</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 223.

<sup>34</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 223.

<sup>35</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 220 and 230.

<sup>36</sup> "The charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company" In *English Historical Documents Volume IX: American Colonial Documents to 1776*, edited by David C. Douglas and Merrill Jensen, Vol. IX. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 72-84. And "The First Virginia Charter 1606." *American History from Revolution to Reconstruction and Beyond*. ed. George M. Welling. University of Gronigen. Accessed November 15, 2015. <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/16001650/the-first-virginia-charter-1606.php>

<sup>37</sup> Welling ed, "The First Virginia Charter 1606".

companies were governed by a council of investors or stockholders in England, who financed the expeditions and settlements in other regions of the world. The kings of England primarily benefited from these charters by either encouraging the trade of exotic goods, as was the case with old world trade companies such as the East India Company; or by securing a portion of mineral wealth from the colonies, which was common in charters in the New World.<sup>38</sup> The royal charters allowed the king to bypass the dependence on Parliament for new sources of revenue as the charter companies brought in customs revenue to the king from the import of exotic goods. The most notable charter company in the English American colonies was the Massachusetts Bay colony, which was both one of the largest potential sources of revenue for the crown in New England, but at the same time a challenge to royal authority in the colonies.

The history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony before the English Civil War illustrates the reasons why Charles II and James II focused much of their attention and efforts for royal colonial control on Massachusetts and the surrounding colonies of New England. Massachusetts Bay Colony was one of the two major colonies founded in the Massachusetts region. The first was the much more famous Plymouth colony, founded by a group of Puritans fleeing religious persecution in England.<sup>39</sup> While it was established nine years before the Bay Colony in 1620, Plymouth is much less significant compared to its neighbor, both in terms of economic significance and in population. The Massachusetts Bay Colony was established with the Massachusetts Bay Company charter issued in 1629.<sup>40</sup> The charter followed the model of other trade company charters, with the investment and management of the colony under the control of the stockholders. However, the stockholders of the Massachusetts Bay Company acted in a

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<sup>38</sup> Welling ed, *The First Virginia Charter* 1606.

<sup>39</sup> Anthony McFarlane, *The British In the Americas: 1480-1815*. (Harlow: Longman, 1992), 47.

<sup>40</sup> "The charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company", EHD Vol. IX.

different fashion to many of their contemporaries because they managed the company and the colony from Boston in Massachusetts, rather than in London.<sup>41</sup> The Massachusetts Bay Company located its administration in Boston after a series of debates between the two main factions of Massachusetts Bay stockholders.<sup>42</sup>

The first group of stockholders in the Massachusetts Bay Company was divided between two major factions. The first were London merchants, who were primarily interested in trade.<sup>43</sup> These investors were similar to how the majority of other stockholder companies operated in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The other faction were primarily minor nobility and gentlemen from the English countryside. These men, led by John Winthrop, were Puritans who wanted the Massachusetts Bay colony to become a safe haven for Puritans.<sup>44</sup> After significant debate, the Puritan faction won, and the company was located in Boston, Massachusetts.<sup>45</sup>

While Massachusetts Bay colony was not a significant economic power before the English Civil War, it was the most populous and fastest growing of all of the settler colonies along the eastern shore of North America before the English Civil War. There were two factors behind its comparatively rapid growth. The first is that the gender balance was more balanced than other English colonies. Many who came to Massachusetts Bay were full families, not individual men as was the case in Virginia. Secondly, Massachusetts Bay experienced the “Great Migration” between 1630 and 1640, where as many as 50,000 people migrated from England to the colonies.<sup>46</sup> Massachusetts Bay and New England received the majority of these immigrants,

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<sup>41</sup> McFarlane, *The British In the Americas*, 48.

<sup>42</sup> Merrill Jensen and David C. Douglas, *English Historical Documents: American Colonial Documents to 1776*. Vol. IX. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964). 63.

<sup>43</sup> Jensen and Douglas, *English Historical Documents: American Colonial Documents to 1776*. 63.

<sup>44</sup> McFarlane, *The British In the Americas*, 48.

<sup>45</sup> Jensen and Douglas, *English Historical Documents: American Colonial Documents to 1776*. 63.

<sup>46</sup> McFarlane, *The British In the Americas*, 57.

with around 20,000 arrivals by 1640.<sup>47</sup> The growth of Massachusetts Bay was a sign of the colonies future economic worth, and the Navigation Act, first passed in 1651 and later reissued in 1660 was a royal attempt to harness colonial trade activity for the purposes of generating royal revenue.

The Navigation Act, or by its full title, An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation, was the first complete iteration of England's trade policy. It was designed to enforce English mercantilist policy on the colonies in America, who in the period of the English Civil War and the Interregnum, largely acted autonomously of their overlords in England and actively traded with other colonies and colonial powers in Europe.

The Navigation Act is the first piece of the more directed and unified colonial policy that began to form after the English Civil War. The Navigation Act was necessary to this policy because it was designed to ensure that goods from the English colonies were only shipped to England, supporting England's burgeoning trade empire and earning the king customs revenue on the imports.

The Navigation Act was first created in 1651 during the Cromwell Protectorate.<sup>48</sup> The 1651 Navigation Act was legislation primarily designed to hamper Dutch trade.<sup>49</sup> The Dutch in the 17<sup>th</sup> century had cut into many markets that the English had previously been the domain of English merchants, particularly the cloth industry.<sup>50</sup> To combat Dutch economic activity, Cromwell and his government created the Navigation Act. The 1651 Navigation Act built upon

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<sup>47</sup> McFarlane, *The British In the Americas*, 57.

<sup>48</sup> "The Navigation Act." Constitution Society. Accessed June 1, 2016.  
[http://www.constitution.org/eng/conpur\\_ap.htm](http://www.constitution.org/eng/conpur_ap.htm).

<sup>49</sup> Charles McLean Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History IV: England's Commercial and Colonial Policy*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938), 36-37.

<sup>50</sup> Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History IV: England's Commercial and Colonial Policy*, 23.

earlier trade legislation and the advice from councilors from the 1640s and 1650s, and was directed primarily at the Dutch and other foreign trading powers.<sup>51</sup> Later iterations of the Navigation Act would be more directed at ensuring that the colonies shipped their goods only to England, and that the colonies could not trade with any foreign powers. The 1651 Navigation Act stipulated that no goods or products from Asia, Africa, or the Americas that were not produced in English colonies could not be shipped or sold in England or English territories.<sup>52</sup> This statement in the act hampered Dutch trade because the Dutch had colonies located in Asia, Africa, and the Americas, and by prohibiting trade with those regions, England prevented indirect trade with Dutch colonies. This first Navigation Act has few parallels with later revisions of its statutes. The largest common clause between the 1651 act and the later acts beginning in 1660 was that foreign owned and crewed ships were not allowed to carry goods from England or her overseas possessions.<sup>53</sup>

While the Cromwell Protectorate ended in 1660 with the restoration of King Charles II, many of the laws and policies created between 1651 and 1660 stayed in place or were expanded upon. Many of the administrators from the Cromwell Protectorate survived the transition between the Protectorate and the restoration of the monarchy, and continued to serve the same roles they did in the Protectorate.<sup>54</sup> Of the laws that were kept in the transition, the most significant was the Navigation Act, which was reissued in 1660 by King Charles II, albeit with a very different goal than the original 1651 Navigation Act.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History IV: England's Commercial and Colonial Policy*, 36-37.

<sup>52</sup> "The Navigation Act."

<sup>53</sup> "The Navigation Act."

<sup>54</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 283.

<sup>55</sup> "An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation". EHD Vol. VIII, 533-537



The primary aim of the Navigation Act was to promote internal trade amongst England and her colonies, and to prevent any goods made in England or the colonies from being sold to foreign competitors.<sup>56</sup> England's trade policy is described by Charles M. Andrews in his work *The Colonial Period of American History Volume IV: England's Commercial and Colonial Policy*.<sup>57</sup> Andrews argued England's trade policy consisted of five major parts: The colonial monopoly on the English market, the English monopoly on colonial products, English control on the transportation of colonial goods, the colonies duty to pay customs revenue as they were outside the "fiscal realm" of England, and the enforcement of these rules through the use of England's navy.<sup>58</sup> All of these pieces of England's commercial policy that Andrews described can be found in the 1660 Navigation Act, which was the first complete outline of England's trade policy as it concerned the England and her colonies, as well as other nations that posed a threat to English mercantilist policy.<sup>59</sup>

The two most significant rules of trade established by the Navigation Act were the crew requirements for ships transporting English goods and the penalty for breaking any part of the Navigation Act. All goods produced in England or any of her colonies had to be shipped on vessels crewed by at least three-fourths Englishmen.<sup>60</sup> This was done to ensure that England's fleet was responsible for all of the shipping between England and the colonies, as well as to ensure that customs revenue was paid upon a ships arrival at port. This clause also served to hamper the economic activities of the Massachusetts Bay colony, which had become a significant port in the New World after the English Civil War, which traded with other nations, a

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<sup>56</sup> McFarlane, *The British in the Americas*, 99.

<sup>57</sup> Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History IV: England's Commercial and Colonial Policy*.

<sup>58</sup> Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History IV: England's Commercial and Colonial Policy*, 14-20.

<sup>59</sup> "An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation". EHD Vol. VIII, 533-537

<sup>60</sup> "An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation". EHD Vol. VIII, 534.

violation of the Navigation Act.<sup>61</sup> The other major economic benefit to the crown from the Navigation Act was the punishment for breaking any of the laws contained within.

The punishment for violating the Navigation Act was forfeiture of all goods that the violator was transporting, as well as the vessel itself.<sup>62</sup> A third of the forfeited goods were granted directly to the king.<sup>63</sup> While this was a seemingly significant source of revenue for the king, especially as many of the colonists in America regularly violated the Navigation Act, violations could not be adequately enforced, weakening the potential of the Navigation Act as a source of royal revenue. The Navigation Act has been regarded as one of the most important documents in American colonial history, and were heavily debated in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The major debate surrounding the Navigation Act in American historiography is how the Act affected the economy of the American colonies. Imperial School historians, most notably Oliver Morton Dickerson, argued that the Navigation act was in fact beneficial to colonial economic activity, and that public opinion of the Act in the colonies showed little resistance to English trade law.<sup>64</sup> However this view of the Navigation Act fell out of favor in the 1960s and 1970s, and most colonial American historians now agree that the Navigation Act was harmful to colonial trade and economic activity.

The Navigation Act established English trade expectations and laws for their colonies, but the issue of enforcement prevented the Navigation Act from being an effective source of royal revenue. Thousands of miles of ocean separated England from the colonies in North

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<sup>61</sup> “An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation”. EHD Vol. VIII, 534.

<sup>62</sup> “An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation”. EHD Vol. VIII, 533.

<sup>63</sup> “An Act for the Encouraging and Increasing of Shipping and Navigation”. EHD Vol. VIII, 534.

<sup>64</sup> Oliver Morton Dickerson. *The Navigation Acts and the American Revolution*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1951).

America, and any journey across the Atlantic took at least a month. In 1660, there was little royal or English presence in the colonies. In order to ensure enforcement of the Navigation Act, the King needed to have agents in the colonies that could investigate the colonial governments and the settlers, and report back to the crown on their activities and crimes. By the 1670s King Charles II began to address the issues of enforcement of the Navigation Act with the appointment of new agents, not members of the nobility as had been the norm before the English Civil War, but people of more common backgrounds who were loyal only to the crown, rather than family or to establish merchants.<sup>65</sup>

Royal investigators like Edward Randolph were key to the crown's colonial policy because they acted as the king's observers in America. Since travel between England and the colonies was slow, the king needed agents in the colonies in order to ensure that the Navigation Act was obeyed and report on any violations or offences to the king. Edward Randolph was one of the most important of these investigators, as his reports on the colony of Massachusetts Bay were one of the main justifications used by the king when he revoked the Massachusetts Bay Company Charter in 1684.

In 1676, the task of monitoring the colonies fell upon Edward Randolph by chance. His cousin Robert Mason had been trying to get the crown to restore his rights as proprietor to the New Hampshire colony, and the Lords of Trade eventually capitulated, on the condition that a special messenger, Edward Randolph, deliver the papers to give legitimacy to the cousin's claim.<sup>66</sup> Edward Randolph was also given the task of investigating the colonies and reporting on

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<sup>65</sup> Garibaldi, *Edward Randolph and The American Colonies*, 18.

<sup>66</sup> Garibaldi, *Edward Randolph and The American Colonies*, 4. From Instructions to Randolph, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1676 in *Randolph Letters*, Volume II, 196-199.

their political, economic, and military strength.<sup>67</sup> The colonies in New England, especially Massachusetts Bay warranted investigation because they had become economically significant after the English Civil War.

It was not until the 1640s that Massachusetts Bay saw the beginnings of its economic significance in the fishing and shipbuilding industries. Massachusetts was not suitable to growing cash crops such as tobacco, sugar, or indigo; so for much of its history before the English Civil War, Massachusetts Bay did not contribute significantly to England's trading empire. The colony's first major industry was fishing, exporting around £10,000 worth of fish by the 1640s.<sup>68</sup> However, the real value of Massachusetts Bay came in the form of the vast forests in the region. By 1660, the entirety of New England's shipping and commercial fleet was built in Massachusetts, and by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, New England exported its ships to England.<sup>69</sup> After the English Civil War, Massachusetts served a further economic purpose; functioning as the nexus of trade between England and the rest of her colonies. Raw goods from the Caribbean and the other North American colonies were shipped to Boston, where they were then sent to England. Most notably, Massachusetts took raw sugar from the Caribbean and processed it into molasses, to fuel the rum industry in England. After the English Civil War, Massachusetts Bay was significant enough in terms of economic activity for the crown to focus their attentions on controlling the colony.

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<sup>67</sup> The Lords of Trade were a part of the Privy Council, established by Charles II to enforce the Navigation Act. They later became the Board of Trade in 1696.

<sup>68</sup> Michael Hall Garibaldi, *Edward Randolph and the American Colonies: 1676-1703*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 18.

<sup>69</sup> Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *New England in the Seventeenth Century*. In *The Origins of Empire*, edited by Nicholas Canny. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 209.

Randolph left for the colonies in 1676, and his first major report to the Lords of Trade on the colonies came the next year. His first report was on the colonies of New England, primarily Massachusetts. His investigations lasted one month, and upon his return to England, he delivered a report to the Lords of Trade detailing his experiences.<sup>70</sup> While the report was mostly on the actions of the government in Boston and contained no talk of rebellion or halting Bostonian trade, it did note there was a large difference in political belief between England and Massachusetts: “He [Governor John Leverett of Massachusetts Bay] freely declared to me that the laws made by your Majesty and your Parliament obligeth them...and that all matters in difference are to be concluded by their final determinations, without any appeal to your Majestie.”<sup>71</sup> The people of the Massachusetts colony valued their autonomy from England, as the majority of its population consisted of Puritans who opposed the Anglican Church. While they had always considered themselves largely autonomous from England and desired to be a fully independent country, this statement from Governor John Leverett represented the resistance towards royal control of the colonies held by many in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Leverett argued for the strength and inviolability of the charter for Massachusetts Bay; but, over the next decade, Edward Randolph would make it his mission to see the king hold more direct control over the colony.

Edward Randolph’s 1677 report on the status of New England asserts several damning charges against the Massachusetts Bay colony that harmed English trade and the rights of the crown in the colonies. In 1677 Edward Randolph delivered a report to the Committee for Plantations, a group of the king’s trusted advisors, on the status of the New England colonies.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Garibaldi, *Edward Randolph and The American Colonies*, 24.

<sup>71</sup> Garibaldi, *Edward Randolph and The American Colonies*, 24.

<sup>72</sup> Randolph, “Report on the State of Affairs in New England”, EHD Vol. IX., 237.

Randolph names three colonies that warrant discussion and judgement by the Lord Chief Justices of the King's Bench.<sup>73</sup> Randolph states issues with the colonies of New Hampshire and Maine, and the claims to these colonies by their proprietors, Mr. Mason and Mr. Gorges respectively.<sup>74</sup> Randolph does not describe in detail the issues he found with New Hampshire and Maine, most likely because they were insignificant in terms of population and economic activity, and therefore of less concern to the king. He may have also excluded further discussion of these colonies as they were ruled by proprietors, as opposed to Massachusetts Bay, which was governed by the Massachusetts Bay Company, who were much more resistant to interference from the Crown.

In the 1660s and 1670s, several other agents of the crown had investigated the colonies, but it was Edward Randolph who created a concrete list of crimes committed by the government of Massachusetts Bay.<sup>75</sup> Edward Randolph's 1677 report on the status of New England asserts several damning charges against the Massachusetts Bay colony that harmed English trade and the rights of the crown in the colonies. The other colony in question in the report is the Massachusetts Bay Colony, which Randolph charged with a much greater issue than that of New Hampshire or Maine. Randolph questions the legitimacy of the Massachusetts Bay charter and whether or not they had any legitimacy to their land and their governance.<sup>76</sup> Randolph charged the government of Massachusetts with eight offences against the crown, including: no legitimacy to own and govern the territory of New England; refusal to take the oath of allegiance; they harbored those who had opposed the king during the English Civil War; minting currency; execution of English subjects for matters of religion; violent opposition and armed uprising in

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<sup>73</sup> Randolph, "Report on the State of Affairs in New England", EHD Vol. IX., 237.

<sup>74</sup> Randolph, "Report on the State of Affairs in New England", EHD Vol. IX., 237.

<sup>75</sup> Randolph, "Report on the State of Affairs in New England", EHD Vol. IX., 238.

<sup>76</sup> Randolph, "Report on the State of Affairs in New England", EHD Vol. IX., 238.

1665 and 1668; the requirement of oaths of fidelity by all who inhabited the territory; and violations of the Navigation Act; which cost the crown up to £100,000 of lost revenue yearly.<sup>77</sup> Randolph certainly overstated some of his claims, especially the lost revenue, which was forty percent higher than the trade estimates made by London merchants.<sup>78</sup> Perhaps the most damning charge is the first, “That they have no right either to land or government in any part of New England and have always been usurpers.”<sup>79</sup> King Charles II had been attempting to find reasons to revoke the remaining trade company charters, and Randolph delivered exactly what he wanted to hear with this report.

As a result of Randolph’s charges and his recommended course of action for the Massachusetts Bay colony, the king had the opportunity to enforce the Navigation Act. The greatest obstacle to its enforcement was the lack of loyal subjects and agents who would work to ensure that both the Navigation Act was followed, and that if there were violations, that the merchant in question be punished and his goods forfeited to the crown. Randolph continuously asserted in all of his investigations and writings that resistance to the crown came from a select few in the colonies, and that the vast majority of the colonial populace supported and even desired royal rule.<sup>80</sup> With all of these charges, Randolph’s recommended course of action was to place Massachusetts and New England under royal rule.<sup>81</sup> Randolph’s vision for the American colonies was eventually realized: the Massachusetts Bay charter was abolished by King Charles II in 1684 and its colonial government disbanded, paving the way for the establishment of the

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<sup>77</sup> Randolph, “Report on the State of Affairs in New England”, EHD Vol. IX., 238.

<sup>78</sup> Garibaldi, *Edward Randolph and The American Colonies*, 35. (Garibaldi uses the estimates from the Petitions of Mercers and Weavers, dated April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1676)

<sup>79</sup> Randolph, “Report on the State of Affairs in New England”, EHD Vol. IX., 238.

<sup>80</sup> Randolph, “Report on the State of Affairs in New England”, EHD Vol. IX., 238.

<sup>81</sup> Randolph, “Report on the State of Affairs in New England”, EHD Vol. IX., 238.

Dominion of New England. By revoking the charter and establishing a royal governance of the colony, the king could much more reliably enforce the Navigation Act.

The reaction to Edward Randolph and other royal investigators in the American colonies was harsh and even violent at time. Many report accounts of assault and imprisonment by colonial administrators, illustrating the animosity that the colonial governments, particularly in New England and Massachusetts Bay held towards royal officials. Edward Randolph was not a popular man in the colonies. Over the course of his career, he reports his experiences of arrests and assaults by colonial official numerous times. In his 1701 report on the crimes of the proprietary governors Randolph gave an account of his imprisonment by the governor of Pennsylvania, Mr. Markham.<sup>82</sup> It is clear from these events in the reports that the government of Massachusetts Bay was openly hostile towards any agents who challenged their autonomy.

Randolph remained active in colonial affairs until his death in 1703. In one of his last major reports on colonial governors, issued in 1701, he charged various colonial administrators with a wide variety of crimes against the crown, including harboring pirates, illegal trading, assaulting agents of the crown, and opposing the Navigation Act.<sup>83</sup> Randolph named a large number of individuals in this report and accuses them with a wide variety of crimes. The most severe was Colonel Talbott, the governor of Maryland, who was charged with murdering a royal customs official, and Read Elding, the governor of the Bahamas, was charged with piracy.<sup>84</sup> Randolph details the crimes committed by the colony, but does not name any specific

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<sup>82</sup> Edward Randolph, "Crimes and Misdemeanors of the Proprietary Governors" In *English Historical Documents: American Colonial Documents to 1776*, edited by Merrill Jensen and David C. Douglas, Volume IX. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 259-251.

<sup>83</sup> Randolph, "Crimes and Misdemeanors of the Proprietary Governors", EHD Vol. IX, 249-251.

<sup>84</sup> Randolph, "Crimes and Misdemeanors of the Proprietary Governors", EHD Vol. IX, 249-250.



offenders.<sup>85</sup> He echoes his report on the colony from 1677 by stating “They enrich themselves by their continued breach of the Acts of Trade [the Navigation Act], some of the members of the council being illegal traders.”<sup>86</sup> This document continues to illustrate the importance of Randolph’s role as colonial investigator, as the crimes that he charges these governors and other officials are much more severe than the crimes brought against Massachusetts Bay in 1677. Agents like Edward Randolph continued to play a key role in royal colonial activities when William III came to power, and would continue to play an important role until the American Revolution.

Throughout Randolph’s near quarter century career of royal investigator in the colonies, he adhered to his support for royal rule in the colonies. He notified the Privy Council of violations of the Trade and Navigation Acts, which cost the crown in lost customs revenue. While he overstated the amount of lost trade revenue, any potential source of revenue was valuable when the monarchy ran a deficit of over £200,000 a year.<sup>87</sup> Randolph was a force for the monarchy in the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, providing justifications for the revoking of charters and the implementation of more direct royal rule in the colonies. Only one person was perhaps more significant to royal rule in the 17<sup>th</sup> century American colonies than Randolph. That person was Sir Edmund Andros, one of the governors of New York and the person chosen to lead the Dominion of New England.<sup>88</sup>

Royal Colonial policy and ambitions could not come to full fruition with the colonial charters still in place. In addition, while the king employed investigators such as Edward

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<sup>85</sup> Randolph, “Crimes and Misdemeanors of the Proprietary Governors”, EHD Vol. IX.

<sup>86</sup> Randolph, “Crimes and Misdemeanors of the Proprietary Governors”, EHD Vol. IX, 251.

<sup>87</sup> Bucholz and Key, *Early Modern England*, 279.

<sup>88</sup> “Commission to Sir Edmund Andros as governor of the Dominion of New England”, EHD Vol. IX, 239.

Randolph to observe colonial activity, they wielded no real authority except to report to the king. To ensure enforcement of the Navigation Act, as well as to secure new forms of revenue through direct taxation, King James II created the Dominion of New England, a royal colony governed by Edmund Andros, who was only subordinate to the crown.

An expert administrator was needed to govern the Dominion of New England, and King James II chose Sir Edmund Andros, a man who had proven both his loyalty and his skill to King James II. Edmund Andros and his family were staunchly loyal to the Stuarts and the monarchy throughout the English Civil War, supporting Charles II claim even during the Protectorate government.<sup>89</sup> James, Charles II's younger brother and the future king, appointed Andros governor of New York in 1674, where he remained until 1683.<sup>90</sup> Andros was regarded as an effective administrator in New York, earning the future King James II much needed revenue from customs duties.<sup>91</sup> Andros was most notable, however, for his role in the Dominion of New England, the most ambitious attempt by the English crown to directly govern the colonies in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The Dominion of New England, first founded in 1686, encompassed the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Maine, Plymouth, New Hampshire, and Connecticut<sup>92</sup> and represents the culmination of royal efforts by Charles II and James II to bring the colonies under royal supervision in the aftermath of the English Civil War. A 1688 expansion brought the colonies of New York and the two Jerseys, which had previously been under the authority of royally

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<sup>89</sup> William Henry Whitmore. *The Andros Tracts: Being a Collection of Pamphlets and Official Papers Issued during the Period between the Overthrow of the Andros Government and the Establishment of the Second Charter of Massachusetts; with Notes*. (Boston: Prince Society, 1868.) ix.

<sup>90</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 99.

<sup>91</sup> Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 249.

<sup>92</sup> "Commission to Sir Edmund Andros as governor of the Dominion of New England", EHD Vol. IX, 239.

appointed proprietors, into the Dominion.<sup>93</sup> The Dominion of New England resembled the Spanish Viceroyalty system, where a royally appointed governor ruled over a large swath of territory.<sup>94</sup> The Dominion was governed by Edmund Andros, alongside a council of notable people from both England and the colonies. Some of the people in the council were Edward Randolph, who due to his extensive role in royal investigations of the colonies approved many of the members of the first council, as well as Wait and Fitz-John Winthrop, grandsons of John Winthrop, the founder of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.<sup>95</sup> The Dominion was an economic as well as a political institution, and helped to generate royal revenue in several key ways.

The Dominion allowed the king to effectively enforce English trade law that had long been ignored in the colonies, especially in Massachusetts Bay. The Navigation Act had been actively ignored by many colonial merchants since its creation in 1660. Many of the reports created by Edward Randolph and other royal investigators repeatedly mention acts of piracy, illegal trading, and smuggling in the colonies.<sup>96</sup> The Navigation Act was unenforceable so long as there was no significant royal presence in the colonies. However, the creation of the Dominion allowed Andros to effectively enforce the shipping requirements named in the Navigation Act. In his governmental commission, Andros is granted the power to create new ports and harbors, as well as to make new customs houses and appoint officers in those said ports.<sup>97</sup> By more effectively enforcing the Navigation Act, the king earned both more reliable customs revenue from all of the goods shipped from the colonies, as well as any forfeited goods from violators of the act. Customs especially was a steady source of revenue that the king could rely on. For

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<sup>93</sup> "Commission to Sir Edmund Andros as governor of the Dominion of New England", EHD Vol. IX, 239.

<sup>94</sup> Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 291.

<sup>95</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 180.

<sup>96</sup> Randolph, "Crimes and Misdemeanors of the Proprietary Governors", EHD Vol. IX, 249-251.

<sup>97</sup> "Commission to Sir Edmund Andros as governor of the Dominion of New England", EHD Vol. IX, 240.

example, in 1685, Parliament granted James II a new sugar and tobacco duty, which earned an estimated £100,000 of yearly revenue.<sup>98</sup> However, the largest source of revenue for the king from the Dominion was not directly established in Andros' commission, rather it came as a result of the end of the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1684.

Revoking the Massachusetts Bay Charter allowed the king to directly tax the property of the settlers of Massachusetts Bay. Through the revocation of the charter and the establishment of the Dominion of New England, all of the land owners discovered that their titles to the land were null and void, and that they would have to rent their land directly from the crown.<sup>99</sup> There is no clear figure for how much revenue these property taxes generated the king, but, with around 50,000 people living in Massachusetts Bay and around 80,000 in the whole of the Dominion, the revenue generated would not have been insignificant.<sup>100</sup> This idea reflected a return to the early 1600s concept that the king was the sole owner of the land of the New World, and leased the land to the charter companies. These property taxes combined with the taxes imposed by Andros were widely unpopular among the colonists, as they saw the new taxes as infringing on their rights and liberties as Englishmen.<sup>101</sup> The Dominion of New England was not solely an institution designed to generate revenue for the crown, and Andros took several measures beyond economic controls to assert the king's authority in the colonies.

The Dominion administered all aspects of colonial life in the Dominion, including making attempts to quash religious nonconformists, which had largely been left untouched by

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<sup>98</sup> Richard S. Dunn, *The Glorious Revolution and America*. In *The Origins of Empire* edited by Nicholas Canny. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 453.

<sup>99</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 186.

<sup>100</sup> "Estimated Population of American Colonies: 1610-1780". Vancouver Island University. Accessed June 1, 2016. <https://web.viu.ca/davies/h320/population.colonies.htm>

<sup>101</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 185.

earlier royal efforts, as well as redefining colonists' rights. The legal status of English colonists was ill defined in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Andros did not think of the colonists as "Englishmen".<sup>102</sup> While there was little conception of national citizenship in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there was still a distinction between true "Englishmen", who benefitted from the laws of England, and those who did not. This idea played a key role in the turmoil surrounding the Dominion of New England, as the people of the colony argued that they were Englishmen and held the full rights and privileges associated with that distinction, while Andros argued that as colonists they relied on the king's good will for their continued existence.<sup>103</sup> The result of these debates was the outright ban of town meetings by Andros, with the exception of one meeting yearly to elect officials.<sup>104</sup> Along with the destruction of rights as Englishmen, Andros also began to attack the Puritan majority of Massachusetts Bay and New England, driving an even greater wedge between his administration and the people in the colony.

The religions of the people of the Dominion were mixed, but a large portion of the populace in the Massachusetts Bay area were devout Puritans. Andros removed many of the old rights privileges that the Puritan churches in New England had previously enjoyed.<sup>105</sup> While Andros encouraged the spread of the Anglican Church, he did not forcibly convert those of other faiths. Andros allowed for freedom of conscience in the Dominion, which disrupted the political hegemony that the Puritan congregations had previously enjoyed.<sup>106</sup> The Quaker minority in the

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<sup>102</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 185.

<sup>103</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 185.

<sup>104</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 186.

<sup>105</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 191.

<sup>106</sup> McFarlane, *The British in the Americas*, 201.

New England colonies supported Andros in this movement, as they had long been oppressed by the Puritan majority.<sup>107</sup>

Andros and the Dominion of New England represented the peak of royal authority in the American colonies in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the period where the king extracted the most revenue from the colonies through customs and direct taxation. However Andros' efforts to institute royal dominion over the colonies did little to endear him to the colonists in the region. The majority of his actions while governor of the Dominion only served to increase the animosity between the colonists, especially those in Massachusetts Bay, and the king through his representative Andros. While Andros was by no means a poor administrator -- he was well regarded in his time as governor of New York -- the Dominion and his administration was widely unpopular for his religion, the new taxes, and the end of the autonomy of Massachusetts Bay. In 1689, the people of the Dominion rose up against Andros and his administration after hearing of the Glorious Revolution in England.

The Glorious Revolution in England, which resulted in the abdication of King James II and the beginning of King William III's reign, did not end royal ambitions for the colonies. While King William III issued new charters for the colonies previously in the Dominion, he also created new royal institutions such as the Board of Trade, designed to monitor the colonies and ensure they were productive for England.

The Glorious Revolution in England both disrupted and continued the status quo for the colonies and for royal revenue. While King William III initially reissued the charters for the former colonies of the Dominion, he continued the ambitions for royal control of the colonies.

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<sup>107</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 193.

James II was not a popular king in England, especially amongst the nobility. In addition to this, there were concerns that he was a secret Catholic and was working to undermine the Anglican Church.<sup>108</sup> In response to these undercurrents, William III, the Prince of Orange and Stadholder of the United Provinces promised to arrive on the shores of England with a military force to liberate the English from James II and to defend Protestantism.<sup>109</sup> On November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1688, William III landed in Southwestern England, and reached the city of London by December.<sup>110</sup> With William's invasion, the Glorious Revolution went into full swing. Unlike the English Civil War, James II quickly fled the country, and William III and Mary II took over as King of England and Scotland with little conflict.<sup>111</sup> The colonies had a delayed reaction to the Glorious Revolution, partly due to the time it took for news to travel from England to the colonies. When news of the revolution reached the shores of the Dominion, however, the colonists used the opportunity to overthrow the unpopular Dominion government.

The events in April 1689 in the Dominion of New England were a reaction to the three years of Dominion rule, and all of the offences that the people of Massachusetts Bay and the Dominion believed that Andros committed against them. However, the timing of the revolt was due to the Glorious Revolution that had occurred in England in 1688. If the colonists had tried to revolt earlier, it is likely that King James II would have sent additional soldiers and ships to quell any attempt at rebellion. On April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1689, the people of Boston revolted against and overthrew the Dominion, capturing Andros, whose seat of power was in Boston.<sup>112</sup> Like the Glorious Revolution in England, the 1689 Boston Revolt was bloodless, as the garrison of

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<sup>108</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 221.

<sup>109</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 226.

<sup>110</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 226.

<sup>111</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 227.

<sup>112</sup> Dunn, *The Glorious Revolution and America*, 456.

fourteen soldiers could do little to protect Andros and his council from the well over two thousand armed militia and a great majority of the population of Boston as they revolted.<sup>113</sup>

King William III, who shared the interest of centralized royal rule over the colonies with his predecessor, could do little to prevent the reestablishment of autonomous governments in New England, as his attention and forces were focused on a war with France and troubles with the Irish.<sup>114</sup> While the Glorious Revolution and the removal of James II restored a degree of colonial autonomy, William III did not abandon the idea of centralized colonial rule. Instead, he created a new council: the Board of Trade, which oversaw not only trade in the colonies, but every aspect of colonial life until the American Revolutionary War.<sup>115</sup>

The Board of Trade is a compromise between the colonial investigators and the direct governance of the Dominion. Board of Trade agents wielded a good deal of royal authority in the colonies, with the ability to direct orders to colonial governors, but they did not directly administer them as had been the case in the Dominion. After the Glorious Revolution and the installation of William III as King of England, the English Monarchy lost much of its authority to rule in England. The end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the rise of Parliament as the most powerful governmental institution, but the crown still held nearly complete control over the realm of overseas territories and the colonies.<sup>116</sup> This allowed William and successive monarchs of England continued to push for centralized control of the American

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<sup>113</sup> Dunn, *The Glorious Revolution and America*, 456.

<sup>114</sup> Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America*, 245.

<sup>115</sup> "The Commission of the Board of Trade" In *English Historical Documents Volume IX: American Colonial Documents to 1776*, edited by David C. Douglas and Merrill Jensen, Vol. IX. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 245-248.

<sup>116</sup> Petty, "The Powers of the Kings of England", 73.



colonies. To facilitate this, William established the Board of Trade, which oversaw not only trade in the colonies, but practically every aspect of their existence.

The commission of the Board of Trade created an organization that functioned in a similar manner to the earlier investigators like Edward Randolph, but with greater authority to command colonial governors on economic affairs. Their task was to ensure that the colonies were functioning to advance trade in England.<sup>117</sup> Established in 1696 by William III, the primary responsibility of the Board of Trade was to ensure the continued promotion and enforcement of trade, the cornerstone of the English Empire.<sup>118</sup> To manage the affairs of the colonies and investigate any issues or discontent, the Board of Trade employed commissioners, who performed a role similar to Edward Randolph, but with a greater degree of authority, as the Board of Trade was directly subordinate to the Privy Council, and therefore, the king.<sup>119</sup> Agents of the Board of Trade were the representatives of the crown in the colonies, and could use many of the powers that earlier investigators like Randolph could wield.<sup>120</sup> The Board of Trade remained a colonial institution until the American Revolution, and they would eventually manage all aspects of colonial life, beyond their initial mandate of protecting and facilitating trade.<sup>121</sup> Like Randolph and other earlier investigators the Board of Trade, agents investigated the colonies and created reports that were sent to the Privy Council as well as the King.

The Board of Trade report from 1701 details several violations of the king's laws by colonial governments and gives a recommendation for the establishment of royal control in the

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<sup>117</sup> The Commission of the Board of Trade, EHD Vol. IX. 245-248.

<sup>118</sup> The Commission of the Board of Trade, EHD Vol. IX, 246.

<sup>119</sup> The Commission of the Board of Trade, EHD Vol. IX, 247.

<sup>120</sup> The Commission of the Board of Trade, EHD Vol. IX, 246-47.

<sup>121</sup> Douglas and Jensen, *English Historical Documents: American Colonial Documents to 1776*, 245.

colonies violating the laws.<sup>122</sup> In the report, the agents do not name any specific colonies or governors that ignore the king's laws, in stark contrast to a report by Edward Randolph in the same year, which specifically names governors and other officials that committed crimes against the king.<sup>123</sup> The Board of Trade echoes many of the issues that had plagued crown colonial policy before the Glorious Revolution: ignoring the Navigation Act and trading illegally with other countries.<sup>124</sup> The report also accuses the colonies of not properly building their own defenses, through the recruitment of militia or by constructing forts.<sup>125</sup> The recommended course of action for the king is the direct assertion of royal rule in the offending colonies, "and the introducing such an administration of government and fit regulation of trade as may put them into a better state of security and make them duly subservient and useful to England, does every day become more and more necessary."<sup>126</sup> The major difference between this call to directly govern the colonies and the happenings in the Dominion is that the Board of Trade report specifically states that the assertion of royal rule should not attempt to directly seize individual properties, as was done in the Dominion.<sup>127</sup> It is likely that the Board of Trade recommended this because of the unpopularity of the direct taxation imposed by King James II that was one of the major factors behind the 1689 Boston Revolt.

The Board of Trade was the evolution of English royal colonial policy after the collapse of the Dominion of New England. Agents of the Board of Trade functioned in a similar role to earlier investigators such as Edward Randolph, in that they were tasked with ensuring that the

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<sup>122</sup> "Report of the board of Trade on Proprietary Governments" In *English Historical Documents: American Colonial Documents to 1776* edited by Merrill Jensen and David C. Douglas. Volume IX (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 251-252.

<sup>123</sup> Randolph, "Crimes and Misdemeanors of the Proprietary Governors", EHD Vol. IX.

<sup>124</sup> "Report of the board of Trade on Proprietary Governments", EHD Vol IX., 251-252.

<sup>125</sup> "Report of the board of Trade on Proprietary Governments", EHD Vol IX., 252.

<sup>126</sup> "Report of the board of Trade on Proprietary Governments", EHD Vol IX., 252.

<sup>127</sup> "Report of the board of Trade on Proprietary Governments", EHD Vol IX., 252.

colonies followed the king's laws and were performing their duty as an aspect of England's trade empire. Unlike the earlier royal investigators however, Board of Trade agents had the power to issue orders to colonial governors, although whether or not the colonial administrators actually obeyed those orders is a different story entirely. The Board of Trade acted as an organization that allowed for the king to indirectly supervise economic and political activity in the American colonies. Its power waxed and waned in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in response to various events in the colonies, however it remained a significant institution in America until the Revolutionary War.

Between the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and the death of King William III in 1702, England saw a significant transformation of its colonial policy. With the Navigation Act of 1660, England firmly established its trade policy as well as what the king desired from the colonies, namely the flow of valuable trade goods directly to England. The Navigation Act would have been a strong source of royal revenue were it not for issues of enforcement of the Act in the colonies. To more effectively enforce the Navigation Act, the king sent investigators to the colonies, whose reports eventually led to the removal of the Massachusetts Bay Charter and the institution of the Dominion of New England. The Dominion of New England both allowed the king to effectively enforce the Navigation Act, as well as directly tax his subjects in the Dominion, a significant source of revenue. When the Dominion collapsed, the Board of Trade filled the void to a degree, functioning as a balance between the direct administration of the Dominion and the investigatory role of Edward Randolph and other royal agents in the colonies.

England's colonial policy in the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century can be understood from more than just the perspective of the generation of royal revenue and economics. England's colonial policy and colonial actions can be understood from the perspective of the assertion of

absolute monarchy in the American colonies, or through the lens of religion and religious control, or through the perspective of colonist rights and their status as “Englishmen”. While this research argued that the need for royal revenue was the strongest factor in shaping English colonial policy in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it is also important to note that there were a multitude of factors behind every royal policy and decision, and that to fully understand the complex network of policies, laws, and actions that made up English colonial policy in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it is important to view from multiple perspectives.

The narrative of royal tyranny over the colonies is common for early histories of the American Revolution. Early historians saw the Americans as heroic figures resisting the tyranny of a distant monarch.<sup>128</sup> Historians of the Imperial School saw the American colonies as supportive of the English trading empire until a series of mercantilist laws in the 1760s turned colonial opinion against the English.<sup>129</sup> Notwithstanding a whole manner of differing opinions on the issue, many focus on the latter half of the 1700s to construct their arguments. I argue, instead, that focusing solely on the late 1700s does not allow for full comprehension of the issues surrounding conceptions of royal rule and authority in the American colonies. The 1600s, especially the period after the English Civil War until the Glorious Revolution, saw the foundations of centralized royal rule created and idealized in the three years of the Dominion. In addition to broadening the timeframe of concern, it is also important to recognize that the study of royal rule in the colonies requires consideration of both sides of the Atlantic. If one ignores the American colonial side of the topic, it is hard to understand how legislation created in England helped to extract revenue from the colonies as well as how the colonies reacted to

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<sup>128</sup> Osgood, “England and the Colonies”, 440.

<sup>129</sup> Osgood, “England and the Colonies”, 440-441.

events in England. If you do not consider England, one does not receive the full picture behind the colonial legislation that the colonists reacted to, as a complex series of political and economic factors was behind every idea of colonial control in England.

If we return to the story of the Boston revolt in 1689, we can see direct parallels with the American Revolution. Complaints of taxation and governance fueled the 1689 revolt, a story that would be echoed nearly one hundred years later during the Revolution. Ignoring the full extent of the history behind colonial rule in the American colonies deprives us of key knowledge that allows us to more completely understand the issue. American colonial history is best understood as a long term story, spanning hundreds of years of history and a multitude of complex economic, political, and ideological factors across both the American colonies and their colonial overlords in England.

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